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# An Experiential Journey

Abdul Rahim Mohd Zin

The end of Year 1 Architectural Design Studio marked the transition from the foundation to the next level of Architectural Training. It is not just about architectural facts but more important, the able mind to analyse, translate and transform the non-tangible factors to a physical being of good architecture to serve all users. This stage emphasizes on developing capabilities to perceive and analyse the elements, translate their qualities and develop an architectural formula which will become the physical form befitting the need of the users. The whole process is complex and contains many inter-twined considerations. The ability to feel the emotion and translating them into a physical being is indeed a challenging task to the young minds of year one students. It is developed through series of experiential learning approaches used in the design projects where the mind goes through a vigorous development process including discussions, debates, knowledge application and trials through an experiential journey.

The studio started with an ergonomic precedent study which brought students into an open field of experiencing ergonomic challenges in a typical day to day life on campus. It is an eye opener to all that a simple ergonomic fault can cause so many hassles on a constant basis. "Ergo-Eco seat" is the first design project and the students were required to design and build a full-scale chair or seat using at least 80% recycled or reused materials. The project promotes design process via experiential learning by applying the five senses. This project also lays the foundation of an eco-friendly architectural design.

"Damai Nature Transit Station" is the final project, which incorporates all previous lessons and marks the final stage of year one studies. The secluded site at the Damai Beach, Sarawak, sets the stage where students were challenged to translate the serene quality of the nature into an architectural piece while respecting the site and yet retaining its aesthetic and functional qualities. This journey developed explorative and critical minds well prepared to move on to the next stage of the early architectural training.

# Jury Review

Norzaini Mufti

The first year of an architectural education will be exciting to some and daunting to others. This is the time when students will discover whether their initial expectations of architectural education match reality. Thus, it is a very challenging endeavor for those given the responsibilities to guide the first year students. There must be a balance of letting the students enjoy their creative exploration and a guided learning towards an architectural career. At this very early stage of their architectural education, students must be encouraged to be brave, committed and responsible in their thinking and designing. Brave to explore something new, unique and out of the box. Committed to work out the chosen design and carry it through from its beginning to the end. Take responsibility of the design in making sure that it meets the stipulated objectives of the project.

The Damai Transit Station project is an appropriate final project for the first year students in terms of its scale and simplicity of function. However, for that very same reason, students must be pushed and encouraged to explore, research and propose unique and interesting solutions in other aspects of the project. Form and volume making, envelope, materiality, contextual issues are some of the relevant issues which can be explored in depths to give strength to each of the proposed design. Solutions seen in this group of students do not vary too much from each other. This might be due to similar advice received from tutors or the tendency to conform to the main stream thinking and/or playing it safe.

As with any group of students at all stages of their architectural education, it is very important to have the pace-setters among the students. These are the better students whom will be the bench mark for others. They need to be identified and pushed to the limits of their capability and hopefully the whole group will together grow to a higher standard. Lastly, it is imperative to emphasize on the students who are just embarking on their architectural education journey that it is critical to know architectural design and thoughts and what are the tools used to express those design and thoughts. Priority must be given to train students who are able to produce design and articulate them in the most effective way, whatever that might be.



# Romancing the Site

Roslina Sharif & Shafizal Maarof

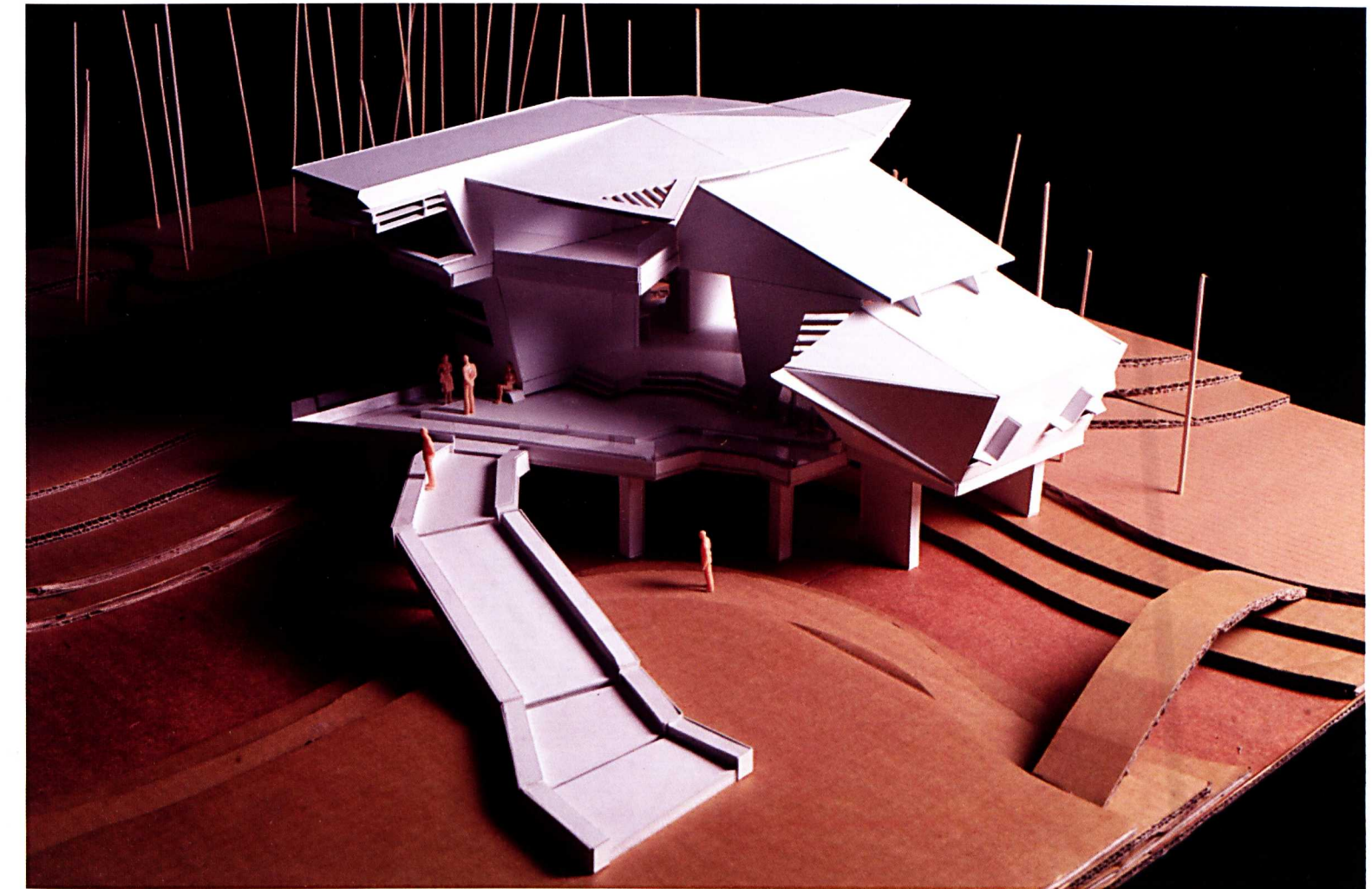
The first step for a designer to start off a design is to analyse the site and immerse oneself in the site's tangible and intangible factors. Site physical factor is one of the main tangible factors that significantly affect the design of buildings or spaces. For the DAMAI TRANSIT STATION, two design proposals have been chosen to describe the impacts and considerations well taken by the first year students in dealing with the site's physical factors.

Mohd Hafiz started his design by creating an approach that let users experience the site when they enter the transit station. An oblique approach further enhances the effect of perspectives on the front façade and form of the building, which mimicked the rocky textures and silhouette abundant on the site. The use of materials such as timber and stone depicts his concept of 'respect,

nature and blend', taking cue from the richness of the natural materials on the scenic beach front. For Siti Asikin, the most significant site factor that affected her well is the lush and beautiful views offered by the site. She ensured that her transit station maximises and takes advantage of the scenic views, by well positioning and sizing of openings or fenestrations. Wide openings at most parts also allow natural ventilation from both land and sea breezes besides reducing the humidity inside the building. Competently analysed and responding well to site physical factors ensure architectural designs that communicate effectively with the context, thus warranting user comforts and efficient building designs.



Siti Asikin Mohd Supni



Mohd. Hafiz Bin Mohd. Ali

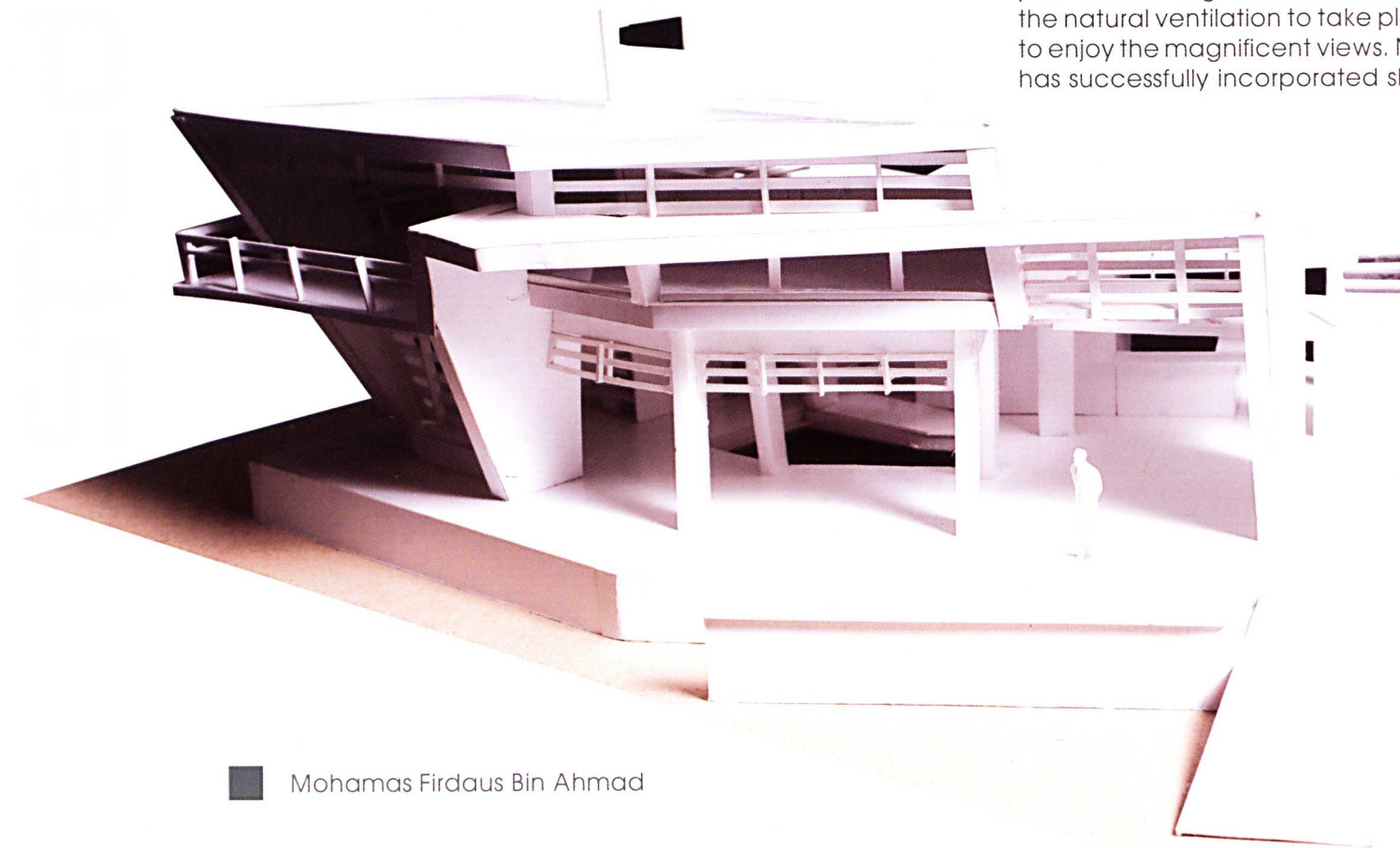


# Cooperative Climatic Design

Shafizal Maarof & Roslina Sharif

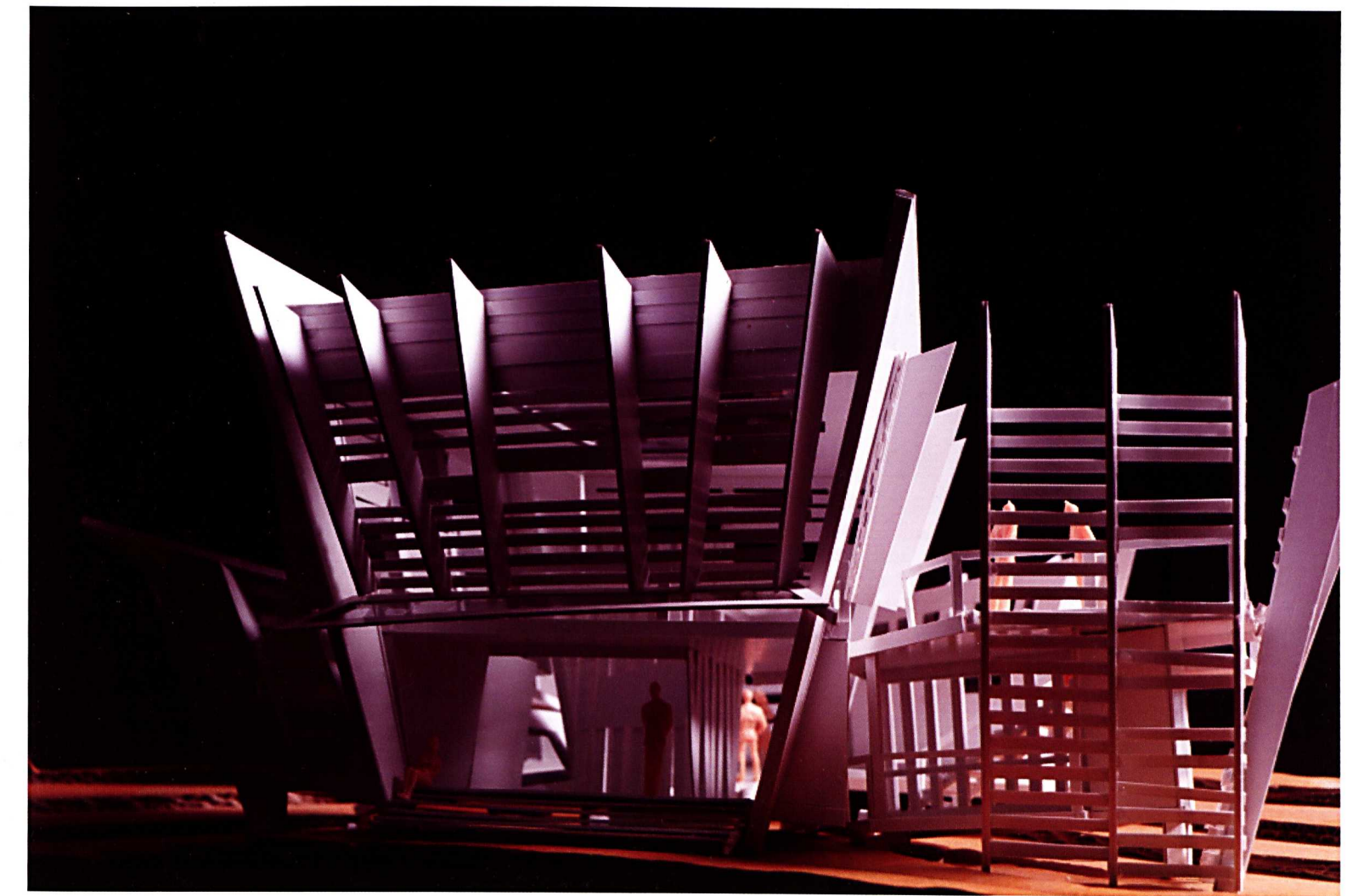
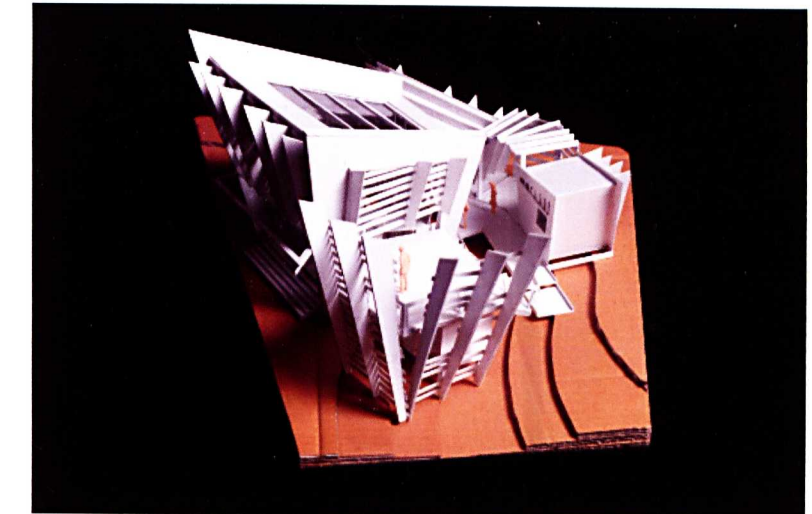


A well responded design to climatic factors is important in ensuring a comfortable indoor environment for the users. The site is located between the proximity of Damai Beach and Santubong Forest Reserve in Santubong, Sarawak. Being deep in the natural setting, the Nature Transit Station is compelled to take advantage of the abundant stunning sceneries on the site, and at the same time, to respond well to the harsh tropical climate with its high air temperature and high relative humidity. Mohammad Firdaus has creatively designed a multi layered and protruding elevation to provide shadings to the wide fenestrations that allow the natural ventilation to take place, whilst letting users to enjoy the magnificent views. Muhammad Nor Fadhli has successfully incorporated shading devices as the



■ Mohamas Firdaus Bin Ahmad

dominant character in his design in an attempt to provide effective shading yet allowing viewing and natural ventilation. At the same time, the shading devices also generate a playful and lively environment created by continuously changing shadows of the devices. All the design strategies implemented by this group of Year 1 students have introduced building designs that truly appreciate the resources provided by the environment and simultaneously, cooperates with the climatic factors to provide a thermally comfortable indoor environment. The awareness on influences of climatic factors in the architectural design could be further enhanced and deeper exploration on well responded climatic designs is encouraged.



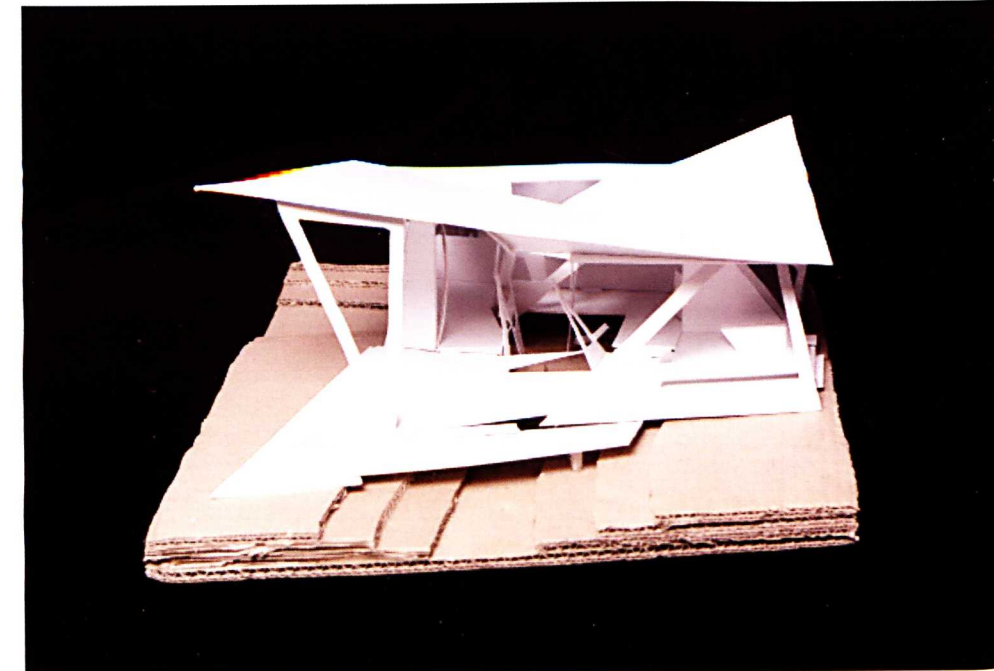
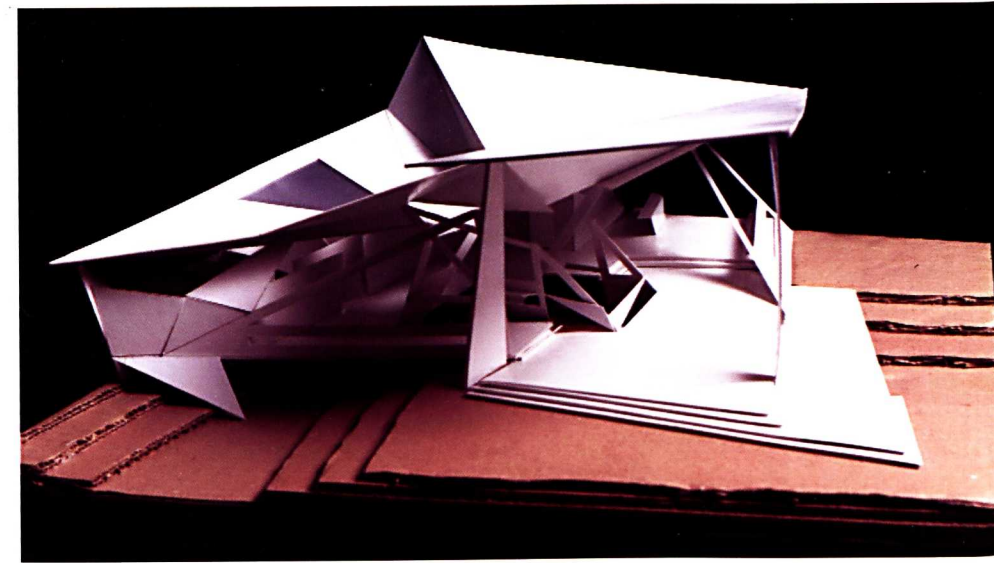
■ Muhammad Nor Fadhli Bin Anas



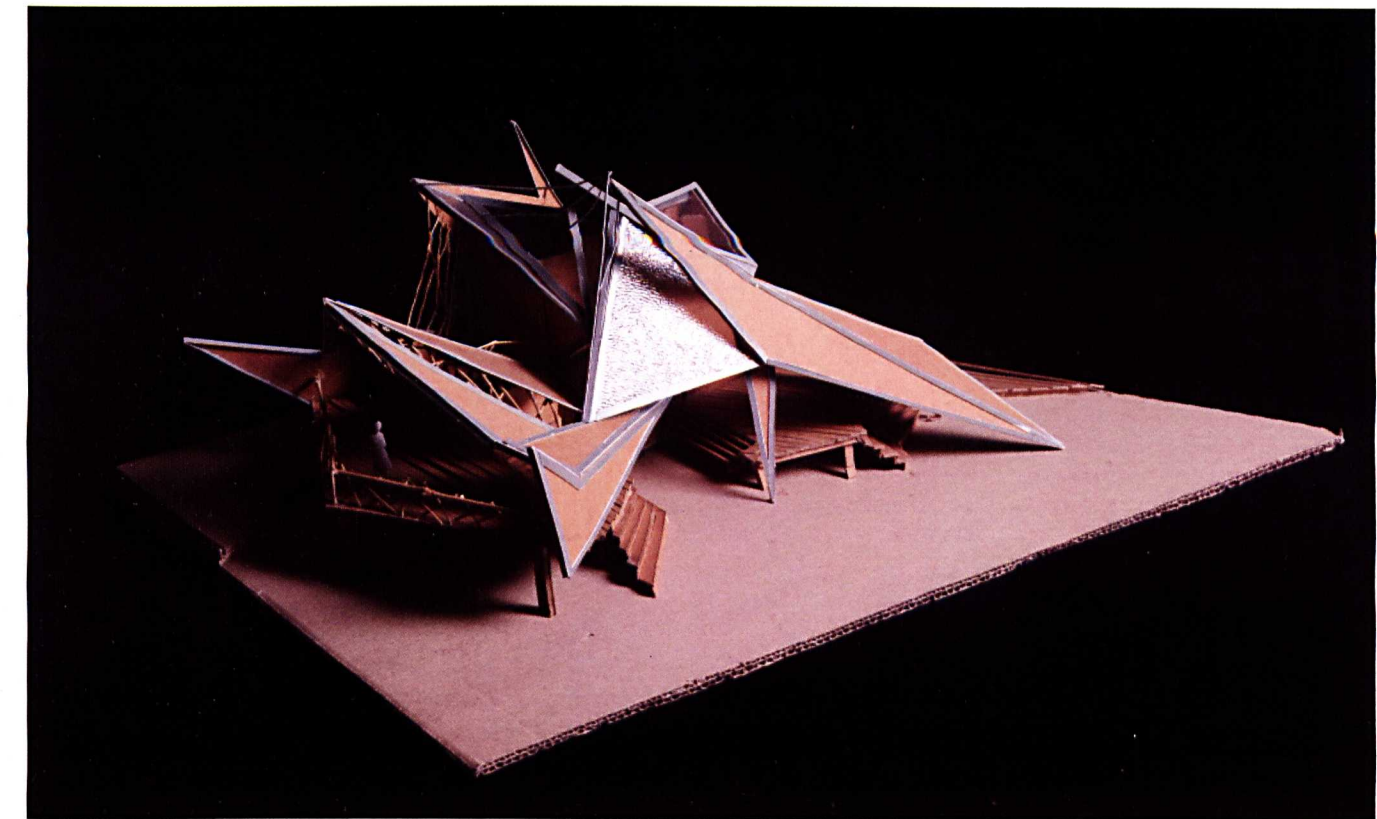
# Intimacy of Spaces

Abdul Rahim Mohd Zin

Design and space planning are not just about arrangement of spaces but rather a more intimate process of formulating the form to contain the spatial qualities of each space. These spaces must be able to link the user to the ever changing elements of nature and other contextual factors. In the Damai Nature Transit Station, students delivered these individual intimate spatial qualities in various formulas in response to the beautiful surrounding greeneries, water stream and white sand of the Damai Beach, Sarawak. Nur Fatin's design is an aggressive play of lines creating individual quality of each space. Despite being aggressive, the design did not overwhelm the beauty of the site. The flowing composition of forms along the stream and topography of the beach in Chai Yen's design manipulated interlocking spaces to maintain a strong visual link to the surrounding. Intimacy of spaces in architectural design is a unique end result deliverable only by the trained minds. It is always a sensitive integral parts of a good architectural training.



■ Goh Chai Yen



■ Nur Fatin Binti Lokman Hakim